

FORM 100-2

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 SECURITY INFORMATION
 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
 INFORMATION FROM
 FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

REPORT

CD NO.

STAT

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

DATE OF
INFORMATION 1953

SUBJECT Political - Communist Party, internal

HOW
PUBLISHED Semimonthly periodical

DATE DIST. 29 Jul 1953

WHERE
PUBLISHED ParisDATE
PUBLISHED 16 - 28 Feb 1953

LANGUAGE French

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY	
CLASSIFICATION	
Cancelled	NO. OF PAGES 2
Changed to <u>FOUO</u>	
BY AUTHORITY OF	
Name <u>MM</u>	
Class	
Sub	
SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.	

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SOURCE B.E.I.P.I. (Bulletin de l'Association d'Etudes et d'Informations
 Politiques Internationales).

CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY PURGES, 1949 - 1952

The Politburo of the KSC (Communist Party of Czechoslovakia) was composed of seven members [in 1949]. Only one is still alive and at liberty --that is Gottwald, its president. Slansky, its secretary-general, was hanged, as was Frank, the assistant secretary. Marie Svermova is in prison. Bares, Breitenfeld, and Bastovansky disappeared. Kopriva, former Minister of National Security, is in disgrace, perhaps in prison.

The Presidium of the party was composed of 22 members. Two have been hanged -- Slansky and Frank. Four are awaiting judgment or a more discreet "liquidation": Marie Svermova, Bares, Breitenfeld, Bastovansky, and Josef Smrkovsky, director general of state farms. There is no news about the former socialist, Evzen Erban, formerly Minister of Social Welfare and secretary-general of the Central Trade Union Council, who has evidently been in disgrace for some time.

Of the 97 members of the Central Committee of the KSC, four have been hanged: Slansky, Frank, Vladimir Clementis, and Otto Sling. Eighteen [sic] are in prison or have disappeared. These are (besides Bastovansky, Bares, Breitenfeld, Smrkovsky, and Marie Svermova, who have already been named):

Ruzena Dubova, responsible for the party organization for Brno Kraj

Vitezslav Fuks, lawyer, party secretary of Ostrava Kraj

Zdenek Hejzlar, deputy of the National Assembly, president of the Czechoslovak Federation of Youth

Gustav Husak, chairman of the Slovak Board of Commissioners

Hanus Lomsky, of Jewish origin, party secretary of Plzen Kraj

Koloman Moskovic (Mosko), of Jewish origin, responsible for the organization of the Central Committee of the Slovak Communist Party in Bratislava.

STAT

- 1 -

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Ladislav Novomesky, writer, commissioner of Education, Sciences, and Arts for Slovakia

Vilem Novy, editor in chief of the central organ, Rude Pravo, and deputy of the National Assembly

Josef Pavel, Colonel, Deputy-Minister of the Interior

Matilda Synkova, deputy of the National Assembly

Karol Smidke, president of the Slovak National Council, deputy of the National Assembly (his death has just been announced in a brief communique)

Jarmila Taussigova-Potuckova, member of the Control Commission of the party, of Jewish origin

Frantisek Vais, deputy of the National Assembly, assistant party secretary for Prague Kraj

Jindrich Vesely, ministerial adviser

There is no news about another member of the Central Committee who was formerly very influential: Bohuslav Lastovicka, engineer, former ambassador to Moscow, long-time Communist, and former commander of the antiaircraft unit, composed of Czechoslovak volunteers, which fought in Spain under the name of the Battery of Klement Gottwald.

New Members

Rude Pravo has not published a complete list of the new members of the Central Committee. It has only reprinted, on 19 December 1952, a communique of the Secretariat of the party containing the names of candidates and members of the Central Committee.

The National Party Conference has named the following as members of the Central Committee: Antonin Aubrecht, Jan Drda, Stefan Fabry, Vladimir Koucky, Jaroslav Ledl, Julius Maurer, Karel Polacek, Jiri Salga, Jan Stencl, Jiri Taufer, and Frantisek Vodslone.

The National Party Conference has elected the following as candidates for the Central Committee: Rudolf Barak, Rudolf Belec, Ludovit Benada, Pavel David, Frantisek Hons, Emerich Hromek, Cenek Hruska, Josef Juran, sic Pavel Jurik, Bruno Koehler, Vaclav Kratochvil, Ladislav Lis, Jaroslav Lochman, Augustin Michalicka, Jan Pistek, Adolf Svoboda, Emanuel Smid, Josef Tesla, Jindrich Uher, Vaclav Uhlir, Bedrich Voda, Frantisek Zbranek, and Jan Zeman.

The communique failed to furnish the names of those candidates and members who resigned or were recalled.

Certain comments could be made about the nominations and promotions made at the conference:

Not one of the new members is Jewish. Most are unknown. Some are national or regional secretaries of the party: Svoboda for Prague Kraj, Jura sic for Brno (both of these men played an important part in the discovery of the "conspiracy" of Slansky), Uhlir for the Olomouc Kraj, and Michalicka, secretary-general of the Slovak Communist Party. Zeman is the chief of the General Political Command of the army. Lis is secretary-general of the Czechoslovak Federation of Youth. Belec is a "workman hero" -- a locomotive fireman; two of the members are well-known Communist writers; and Bruno Koehler is a cosmopolitan type.

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- 2 -

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